

**STATEMENT**  
**BY THE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**  
**H.E. MR. ASHOT HOVAKIMIAN**

*At the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for UNECE Region,  
High-level Policy Segment: Transformation towards sustainable and  
resilient societies in the UNECE Region  
1-2 March, 2018 Geneva*

Mr./Mrs. Chairperson,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished colleagues,

At the outset I would like to thank the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe for organizing Regional Forums on Sustainable Development Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals are already stimulating our actions over the next decades for the sake of humanity and our planet and I do believe that we have a unique opportunity to shape a better world for all.

At the 2015 milestone summit we made a collective pledge that *No one will be left behind*. In this sense, in our view, Sustainable Development Goals are also representing a kind of stress test, both on national and international level. From international perspective, the process is and will continue displaying to what extent the member states are sincere and ready for cooperation on the regional and international levels. From national point of view, it will help reveal the institutional and legal gaps that are hindering its practical implementation.

Dear colleagues,

Since our last meeting, there have been some progress towards the nationalization of the SDGs and I would like to share some information in this regard. More specifically the Intergovernmental commission and its thematic groups ***have completed the process of nationalizing the Sustainable Development Goals*** and currently our aim is to synchronize them with Armenia`s national priorities, 2030 strategic vision plan and reforms. This process is complemented by the ***National SDG Innovation LAB, inaugurated at the end of last year***, which is a joint initiative of the Government of Armenia and the UNDP Country office aiming to accelerate SDG`s with a focus on the strong impact of innovation in advancing “smart development”. It is functioning within the framework of the Centre for Strategic Initiatives, the government`s own laboratory for reforms and is set to cultivate creative ideas, identifying implementation and funding gaps, prototype solutions and new models of funding, measure the impact and raise country profile and public awareness.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We very much appreciate the continuous support to the nationalization process of SDGs and the visit of the UNDP ***Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policies Support /MAPS/ Mission, upon the invitation of the Government of Armenia***, was very instrumental. Their draft outcome document with a set of recommendations was carefully considered by the Intergovernmental task force with certain comments presented to the UNDP. We hope that the comments

provided by the Government to the MAPS Mission report will be adequately reflected in the Document and we look forward for its finalization. The Document will serve as a Roadmap for the SDG implementation in Armenia.

Availability of reliable, relevant and valid data for measuring the progress is of critical importance for the successful functioning of any follow up and review mechanism. Within the UN Economic Commission for Europe, Armenia has been actively involved in the works of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) to help improve coordination of statistical activities in the UNECE region, identify gaps in development of official statistics, exchange and data sharing. I am also pleased to inform you, that our National ***Statistical Service has developed a global metadata of relevant documentation on all indicators***. This work was based on the experience of the United States which has developed similar National Reporting Platform. This work will help to assess current state of affairs with regard to SDGs. I encourage you to visit this National Platform / <http://armstat.am/en/?nid=655> /.

Dear colleagues,

In our view, the topic of our today`s discussion *Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies in the UNECE region* encompasses almost all the aspects of the cross-cutting nature of the Sustainable Development Goals. The mere fact that 47 countries have volunteered to undergo the 2018 National Review process under this very theme speaks for itself. Armenia is also among those countries that will present its first Voluntary National Review at the 2018 High-Level Political Forum under the auspices of the ECOSOC. We recognize the central role of the HLPF in reviewing the implementation process of the Sustainable Development Goals. The report should reflect on the measures taken for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, while it is important that the VNR platform remains political, it should not be regarded as a platform for political speculations. Our experience has shown, that clear distinction between political and politicized is still needed.

Mr./Mrs. Chairperson,

Seizing this opportunity, I would also like to inform the distinguished delegates regarding the organization of the Central Asia and South Caucasus regional platform in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction. The event will take place on June 26-27 in Yerevan. Our main partner in the organization of the platform is the European office of United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. I encourage you to save the date in your calendars and bring your active participation. The invitations will be sent out in due course.

By concluding, I would like to once again thank the UNECE for the excellent organization of the forum as well as for their continued and consistent attention to the Agenda 2030.

Thank you.